

CONGRATULATING PAIGE EPLER  
ON HER GRADUATION FROM THE  
UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA  
HIGH SCHOOL

### HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, June 26, 2009*

Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Paige Laura Epler from Woodbridge, Virginia, on her graduation from the University of Oklahoma High School. Twelve year old Paige graduated on June 5, 2009 as the youngest girl to earn a high school diploma from an accredited high school. Paige had a 4.0 grade point average; however, she excelled in other areas as well. An extremely accomplished violinist, in addition to playing at her graduation, she was the selected violinist for NASA's 50th Year celebration and at President Obama's Inaugural Luncheon.

My colleagues also may know Paige from her passionate efforts to Save the Sharks. Starting at age eight, she has worked to educate people about sharks and dispel the myths that have led to a number of species becoming endangered. Paige has given briefings at the Smithsonian Air and Space Museum, the Science Museum of Virginia, and to the United States Congress.

Madam Speaker, Paige Epler represents the best this country has to offer, and her dedication to her studies bespeaks of the bright future before her. I congratulate her on her wonderful accomplishment and wish her well in all of her future endeavors.

### IN TRIBUTE TO THE LATE AUBREY EMMITT FALLIN

### HON. JACK KINGSTON

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, June 26, 2009*

Mr. KINGSTON. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and service of a truly great American, Aubrey Emmitt Fallin. Aubrey was a courageous veteran, a dedicated citizen, and a fiercely loyal friend and father.

Aubrey was a patriot by anybody's definition. He served as a marine during WWII, landing on Iwo Jima February 19, 1945. He demonstrated indestructible bravery and strength, enduring a grueling 24 hours in which 2,721 of his fellow patriots lost their lives. Within the following 36 days, over 7,000 American soldiers were killed in action. His presence during this historic struggle put him in one of the bloodiest battles in World history. If it were not for brave men like Aubrey the war would have been lost. Risking and overcoming much, Aubrey emerged from the war with deeply rooted pride, admiration, respect, and love for his America.

After his completion of service, Aubrey was not only a veteran, he was a veteran's veteran. Beyond his recollection and stories of this era he would also give lectures on how to apply yesterday's lessons to today and tomorrow. In peacetime, he was just as fierce of a freedom fighter as he was when bullets were flying all around him. Even as his health failed him, he kept a vigilant eye out for the best in-

terest of America. He used his devotion to our great nation to spur and awaken that very same passion within every individual he knew.

Beyond the battlefield, Aubrey served on the front lines of his local political community through his active leadership. He was a member of Coffee County Board of Registrars, The American Legion and Veterans of Foreign War, past chairman of The Coffee County Republican Party, former president of Douglas Hobos & Shriner Clowns, a member of the Masons and Shriners, and a past president of the Exchange Club. He manifested his faithful love for our country through continuing to sacrifice his time and serve his fellow citizens. His unwavering service, vigilance, and outspoken nature secured freedom for all.

Aubrey was an unquestionably loyal friend. I never left Coffee County without at least one bag of peanut brittle. Enjoying a treat made by such patriotic and loving hands was an honor. We will miss Aubrey as a friend and companion, and we will always be appreciative of the freedom we enjoy because of his and others' sacrifice. His life undoubtedly impacted all who came in contact with him for the better. Aubrey has left a lasting legacy of compassion, strength, and service. May God bless his memory forever!

### IN REMEMBRANCE OF THOMAS RAE

### HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, June 26, 2009*

Mr. KUCINICH. Madam Speaker, I rise today in remembrance of Thomas Rae and in recognition of his dedication to his family and country.

Thomas was born on March 2, 1930 in Cleveland Ohio as one of five siblings. Upon graduating from high school, Thomas joined and served in the United States Army for three years before being honorably discharged. After returning to Ohio, he married Mildred Dziak, and they had four daughters who were raised in Strongsville, Ohio. While raising a family, Thomas worked as an inspector for Terex General Motors and later as a supervisor at NASA. Thomas enjoyed his later years in the company of his children and their families. He was fortunate enough to spend time with all thirteen of his grandchildren and especially enjoyed watching them participate in sports. Thomas also took pleasure in the outdoors, playing golf, and handy-work after retirement.

Madam Speaker and colleagues, please join me in remembrance of Thomas Rae, who lived his life with the enduring support of his family and in recognition to his dedicated service to our country. I offer my deepest sympathies to his wife, Mildred; children, Denise Kucinich, Karen Vraja, Arleen Miciunas and Cheryl Vanderwyst; and grandchildren, Gary, Matt, Ryan and Michael Kucinich, Amanda, Samantha and Tommy Vraja, Lukas, Alyssa and Alec Miciunas, Lindsey, David and Nicole Vanderwyst.

### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

### HON. BEN RAY LUJÁN

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, June 26, 2009*

Mr. LUJÁN. Madam Speaker, due to scheduling conflicts, I was unable to be present for rollcall vote No. 431. Had I been present, I would have voted "no."

### RECOGNIZING EUROPE'S BLACK POPULATION

### HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, June 26, 2009*

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise today to introduce a resolution recognizing Europe's Black population and expressing solidarity with their struggle.

Last year, on April 29, 2008, I chaired the U.S. Helsinki Commission hearing entitled, "The State of (In)visible Black Europe: Race, Rights, and Politics" which focused on the more than 7 million people who make up Europe's Black or Afro-descendant population.

Despite their numerous contributions to European society, like African-Americans here, many Black Europeans face the daily challenges of racism and discrimination.

This includes being the targets of violent hate crimes, many of which have resulted in death. Existing inequalities in education, housing, and employment remain a problem and racial profiling is a norm. Few Black Europeans are in leadership positions and political participation is also limited for many, providing obstacles for addressing these problems.

In an effort to raise public awareness of these issues at the national and international level, the Black European Women's Council (BEWC) was launched on September 9, 2008 at the European Union's headquarters. More than 130 Black women from across Europe came to "insist on the recognition and inclusion of Black Europeans economically, politically, and culturally."

This resolution supports BEWC's fight for equality and urges European governments to implement anti-discrimination legislation and other plans of action, including a fund for victims incapacitated as a result of a hate crime.

Given the history of our own country, an increase in transatlantic cooperative efforts between our government and European governments, U.S. and European based civil rights groups, and within the private sector would also provide useful partnerships and assistance in combating racism and discrimination abroad and at home.

This resolution therefore also calls on the U.S. Government to increase support for public and private sector initiatives focused on combating racism and discrimination in Europe as part of our efforts to support global human rights.

It is for this reason that on April 15–16, 2009, I also co-hosted the "Black European Summit: Transatlantic Dialogue on Political Inclusion" at the European Parliament in Brussels with Black and other European minority parliamentarians to exchange information on the roles of racial and ethnic minority policymakers in developing and supporting policies